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C.I.A. Overseers

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on an article published in The Times of June 1 headed "Congress is Accused of Laxity on C.I.A.'s Cover Activity."

I think it is important to make plain that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence reviews in detail every covert-action activity, and each activity is voted upon by every member of the committee after deliberation and discussion. This is done when each case arises as well as on a yearly basis and as part of the annual authorization for intelligence activities.

In the view of the committee, President Carter has honored his commitment in Executive Order 12036 which directs the Director of Central Intelligence and the heads of all agencies involved in intelligence activities to keep the intelligence committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives "fully and currently informed concerning intelligence activities including any significant anticipated activities. . . ."

The Presidential directive of Jan. 28, 1978, also instructed the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies to provide "any information or document" in the possession, custody or control of the agency or Government department to the Senate and House Intelligence Committees, provided it is within the committees' jurisdiction. There is also a requirement to report "in timely fashion" any illegal or improper activities and any corrective action that may have been taken or is planned.

As chairman of the committee charged with oversight over all intelligence activities, I can report that the President's instructions are being carried out by the intelligence community under Adm. Stansfield Turner. There are still some procedural problems that remain to be worked out, but there is no disagreement about the right of access by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to any information on intelligence matters.

BIRCH BAYH

United States Senator from Indiana
Washington, June 5, 1978